

THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

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THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

FOUNDED IN 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors in the West and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to six hundred members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular Membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues of \$10.00. Dues date from the month of the member's election.

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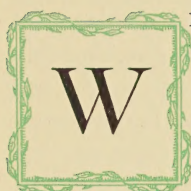
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A VISIT WITH G. B. S.

By Herbert M. and Dorothy A. Evans



WHEN A SCIENTIST strays from his laboratory, he is “out of bounds,” and the modern world of specialization knows full well that he is on holiday and not to be taken too seriously; but that these faithful workers should also have zest for acquaintance with other adventures of the human spirit is natural and should be forgiven them. Forgiveness will surely come if the worker with test tube, telescope, or microscope has been nurtured in a goodly company which zealously loves books (the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco)—books whether they merely entertain or instruct—books which either convey the dreams of man or at any rate tell us what that dreadful cerebral cortex of his is doing.

Who better than George Bernard Shaw has shown us that paradox may sometimes be very near the truth? As an acknowledgment of the stimulus and friendship he has received from his fellow Roxburghers, the writer has pulled out of a hastily written diary the sentences which relate to the happy afternoon when he was permitted to visit this great nonagenarian. He is well aware of the fact that Mr. Shaw is *persona non grata* to many physicians and scientists for views which he, no less than they, regards as unsound, but he is also aware of the fact that this man has with supreme subtlety of mind striven to persuade his fellow man to entertain new ideas. He knows of nothing more important.

Thus it was that the writer, after enjoying the elaborate academic panoply of the Sorbonne, took flight to England on an early winter

This account of a visit with Bernard Shaw is based upon a diary kept by Dr. Evans, distinguished scientist of the Berkeley campus of the University of California, while on an air trip to Europe, December 7, 1946–January 13, 1947, primarily to attend the December Séance Solennelle of the University of Paris. It was read by Dr. Evans before the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco at its meeting in the library of the University of California Press on the evening of March 10, 1947, and is reprinted here by his permission.

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afternoon. To the air station, Les Invalides, he journeyed by autocar along the Seine, the river reflecting the pink colors of that early winter sunset of December 23, 1946. He bade regretful good-bye to the champing golden horses of the Alexandrine bridge and was soon on the two-hour plane ride to Heath Row near London. Just a week later he and his wife were ensconced one noon in a charming little restaurant in Soho, the Escargot, on Greek Street, through invitation of his friend, Dr. Charles Dodds,* who had asked there O. Kyllman, chief of Constable and Company, and Helen Waddell, the medieval scholar who wrote the very notable "Wandering Scholars" and much else. Our talk with Helen was of Rhabanus Maurus, Abbot of Fulda, but we did not fail to remark the soft-spoken, sensitive Kyllman, who sat in the corner and interjected sparkling remarks all that hour, some of them starting with "Now, Mr. Shaw once said," etc., and finally he blurted out, "Dr. Dodds, we must take the Evanses out to Shaw; he will endure them as well as we have done; let me arrange it." We thought no further of the plan, but referred it to the exceedingly good brandy with which Dodds ended his luncheon—as if he had not already opened a red Château twenty years old!

Then one morning an "express" letter arrived suddenly at our hotel from Dodds.

3rd January 1947

Dear Professor,

Mr. Kyllman has just rung me to say that Mr. Shaw will be very pleased to see you and your wife on Monday afternoon.

Mr. Kyllman will himself take you in a car to Ayot St. Lawrence and bring you back. I have promised faithfully to deliver you at Constable's at 2:15 P.M. . . .

I am so glad that he has been able to fix this, . . .

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

E. C. DODDS

Happy but somewhat nervous over this news, we spent a busy two days reading and recalling everything we could about G. B. S. Monday

* E. C. Dodds, M.V.O., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P., etc., Courtauld Professor of Biochemistry in the University of London, Director of the Courtauld Institute of Biochemistry, Middlesex Hospital, London, the discoverer of stilboestrol, well known for his many beautiful studies on the estrogenic activity of synthetic compounds. This grand man was the good angel of our English trip.

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dawned at last, grey and raw. Soon snow began to fall; by noon there was an inch and Dorothy wondered if the trip might not be "off." In dubious mood she made her way to Constable's, and soon Dodds's driver delivered me also at "O. K." Kyllman's office at 10 Orange Street (Leicester Square). Here I found Dorothy already ensconced and carrying my rubbers—the snow was more than an inch deep now. As we waited for the car, I looked about. On Kyllman's office walls was a superb original charcoal drawing of Meredith, by Sargent—a sketch for the painting; a Shaw photograph, and a Dreiser one, autographed. One wall was lined with books, amongst which Shaw's collected works in thirty-three volumes bulked large among the Constable publications of the last forty years. "O. K." had been giving plenty of orders. When he finished, we picked up the pile of automobile rugs and got off at once. "O. K." was looking forward to the trip—and so were we.

A fine large car and a driver who knew his business—no skidding on the very icy, slippery streets and roads in the half-dark of 2:30. But the snow cut down our speed. We did not mind, for as we passed through the quaint village of St. Albans we glimpsed the fairyland setting for the Dickens Christmas we had hoped—and failed—to find in postwar London. It was about 3:50 before we were at G. B. S.'s hedge. For the last two miles I had been reading Shaw's own directions, "From London to Ayot St. Lawrence by Road" (printed on the soft light-green paper which G. B. S. affects). "O. K." had put a copy of these into the driver's pocket, but I returned them to *my* pocket for my scrap album.

Going out, "O. K." gave us the most charming running commentary on G. B. S. He began by putting in my hands three books and by giving Dorothy a shining photograph of the lanky old man on his ninetieth birthday. My books were *Immaturity*, by Shaw (London, Constable, 1931); *The Harley Street Calendar*, by H. H. Buskford (London, Constable, 1930); and *The Political Mad House in America and Nearer Home*, by Shaw (London, Constable, 1933). All were new to us. "O. K." said we must read the preface of *Immaturity*—he read us snatches of it as we drove along—for autobiography. "O. K.'s" delight in this book, he told us, had led Shaw to begin to refer to it with the remark, "Kyllman says this is my best book."

"A falsehood!" Kyllman finally replied, "and if you continue to make that remark I'll get a lawyer and swear out an affidavit to this effect."

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Kyllman's first meeting with Shaw, many years ago, was due to the friendship of his two sisters (older than he) with Janet Sharp, who became the well-known actress, Janet Aychurch. When Janet Sharp was given the leading rôle in one of Shaw's early plays, she took "O. K." to hear Shaw reading over the play one night. Years later, Kyllman said, Shaw walked into his office at Constable's one day and gave him a manuscript.

"Don't let any of your hired readers read this," Shaw said. "They will say it isn't literature—read it yourself."

"I did as I was told," Kyllman said. "It was the manuscript of *Man and Superman*."

Shaw writes all his plays in shorthand and his secretary types them from that. Dorothy asked what became of Shaw's holographs, and Kyllman said that quite recently Shaw had given five volumes of long-hand manuscripts of some of his novels to Dublin. (He has, in fact, recently become an Irish citizen.)

Shaw is, of course, constantly importuned to aid hundreds of causes, but for the last year or two he has answered all requests by saying that he is now entirely withdrawn from all movements of any kind whatsoever. He has given his property at Ayot St. Lawrence to the National Trust.

"People will say I was born here and will come in droves to see it and everything else I possessed!" he remarks with sly humor.

Kyllman recalled two anecdotes of Shaw and Lady Astor. "Nancy" and Shaw were both suffering from headaches at one of her parties. She persuaded him to lie down while she tried to cure him by Christian Science. Shaw, in telling about the effort, said that after two hours she gave up, having failed with him but having cured her own headache. On another occasion, "Nancy" was giving one of her swell parties at which decorations were to be worn. "What will I do?" Shaw asked Kyllman. "I have only the Nobel Prize, and the medal's as big as a dish plate. Shall I wear it?"

Shaw and his wife used not to go much into society, but they entertained many people at their own house and took an interest in young writers. "O. K." recalled taking visitors out to meet Shaw in these hospitable years, reflecting on the adventures of a publisher bringing admirers to his client. (We could not help wondering just what particular trepidations "O. K." might be suffering at the moment as he faced this ordeal with us!) Once Kyllman took out to Shaw's for luncheon a

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little Chinese worshiper. This small man's laugh was done each time with complete and repulsive gingival exposure. "Isn't he simply a little horror?" Charlotte whispered to "O. K." Another admirer whom Kyllman took out was a woman novelist from South Africa. She had begged repeatedly for the interview and Shaw had unwillingly granted it. On beholding her, and whether with purposeful or unpurposeful tactlessness, Shaw said, "Oh, I thought you'd have kinky hair like a Zulu." She was sufficiently offended.

We asked about Shaw's life since his wife's death. Kyllman said that so painful was Mrs. Shaw's (Charlotte's) last illness, and so hopeless, that he couldn't mention her death to Shaw for a long time. When finally he did refer to it, Shaw said, "Physically I am better, for it was a very great strain." It had been a devoted marriage and they had always made their plans on the assumption that he would die first.

At Shaw's hedge the car stopped while I plunged into the soft snow and opened the gate. The backward glimpse down the snowy lane and hedgerows reminded us all of the picture of "Winter at Ayot St. Lawrence" in *G. B. S.* 90.† A nice little maid—not his competent housekeeper—showed us in. An electric heater glowed in the hall and through a doorway we saw a wonderful pile of burning coals in the fireplace of the cozy living room. Filled everywhere with busts, reliefs, statuettes, and photographs of Shaw, the room is nevertheless dominated by a beautiful portrait of Charlotte which hangs above the fireplace. It is done in pastel shades. The significance of the salamander painted in the upper right-hand corner of the canvas eludes us; will a Roxburgher tell us what it means?

In a few minutes, as we warmed our hands before the fire, Shaw slipped in quietly and grasped "O. K." by both hands, full of hearty welcome. Then a genuinely cordial handshake for Dorothy and me. He was wearing very light-colored salt-and-pepper plus fours, with hand-knit khaki socks and maroon-colored cloth indoor boots. His hand-knit khaki woolen mittens left the upper half of each finger free. Half-glasses, completely and finely rimmed with tortoise shell. Beautiful white hair and beard, and pretty, small, very light blue eyes with a nice twinkle. In spite of his height and his erect posture (not stooped at all), he gave the impression of great frailty—as if he might blow away; little stems of legs, and "O. K." says, if you grasp them, similarly tiny arms, and a very thin white skin. His voice is low and soft and not

† London, Hutchinson, 1946, p. 128 b.

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yet "broken," but it is an elusive voice whose exact quality we found it impossible to recapture. Some words he pronounces with a brogue.

He began to talk naturally and at once—no pronouncements and no gesticulations—as he sat in his armchair, hands stretched out to the fire and right foot resting on the hearth rail. This is a characteristic pose, shown in the photograph "By the Fire, 1915."‡

Dorothy asked him how he had found this quiet country place which he had just said to us "civilization," when he first came, "had completely skipped and swept around." The fine brick house, Shaw told us gustily, had been built as a much-too-large vicarage. The vicar, like most vicars, could not afford to live in it and had rented it the year round. (Less impecunious vicars rent for only three or four months, Shaw said!) So the Shaws rented the house. In time the vicar went up to London and lived with a "lady" not his wife, and the vicarage was put up for sale at a figure twice its worth. The Shaws were told to buy or leave. He bought, and for a year or two, he boasts, he was known to the neighborhood as "The Reverend George Shaw."

Shaw now turned to ask me earnestly whether one could see a vitamin or a hormone with a microscope or an electron-microscope. He was surprised when I told him that these substances could now be accumulated in any size mass, just like the sugar on his tea table. He wondered if hormones conferred intellectual as well as physical attributes and confessed to a great intellectual weakness—his inability to do simple sums like, "If two fish cost tuppence ha'penny, how many can you buy for eleven pence?" He wanted to take a "mathematical hormone" to help him with these little sums. Once he had confided his mathematical difficulties to Sir James Jeans, who had proposed a "much worse" problem. (This all interested us, for Kyllman had told us on the outward journey that Shaw personally takes complete charge of his royalties and business affairs—surely no small mathematical task!)

This talk of sums led Shaw to say that he had had no academic education. He had absorbed music and art when he was young. His mother was a singer "like Joe Needham's," he said, and many singers and musicians came to his mother's house to practise for concerts. Shaw came to know each classical thing—Mozart *et al.*—and to him Strauss's waltzes seemed "vulgar." He wanted to be a composer or a great artist like Michelangelo, but he found he could not draw. So he failed at his

‡ G. B. S. 90, p. 128 a.

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two great early aims—music and art. But he discovered that he *could* write plays.

"People say," he remarked, "that I am the greatest playwright since Shakespeare." "This could be true," I said, and he very heartily assented! His playwriting came naturally. And it really came, he knew not how. Years later, on rereading one of his early plays, he said, "Its design and construction were extremely good." But he said he had no sense of having "constructed" it or any other of his plays.

Tea was brought in—cookies, fruit cake, and another plain sugar cake—for Dorothy to serve. G. B. S. took nothing.

He kept coming back to vitamins and hormones. He told a story of meeting Marie Stopes, whom he regarded when he first met her as probably a flirtatious Spanish dancer. He could not believe her when, on his asking why she did not take her husband's name, she replied that doing so would necessitate correcting a hundred reference cards dealing with her work in paleobotany. I assured G. B. S. that this was quite true and told him of the poem in *Punch* some years ago about vitamins. The final stanza dealt with vitamin E, which it declared—referring to her birth-control propaganda—"would blast the hopes of Maria Stopes."

Speaking of medicine, he called Lord Lister "that champion idiot." Perhaps Shaw was first turned against the doctors for good reason. He told us that, having laced a shoe too tight, he had to have his foot operated upon. The wound did not heal—it was kept packed with iodoform—and he was on crutches for eighteen months. Then, remembering an old general practitioner in London, he sought him out. This old doctor told him to put on some moist rags and go about.

"Shall I moisten them with distilled water?" Shaw asked. "No, with pipe water," said the doctor. Within a fortnight the foot was well.

"Good blood probably did it," Shaw said, and turning to me, asked, "How can you get good blood?"

The germ theories of modern medicine Shaw says he can't take very seriously. He pointed out that the human race could never have survived if antisepsis had been necessary. He told of his experience in Ireland, where he'd known hospital gangrene which would kill every victim. Then suddenly it would disappear.

"You've got to explain the disappearance of such a thing before the microbe era gave us its combat methods," he declared.

I ventured the suggestion that some kinds of dirt were useful; wit-

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ness molds like penicillin overgrowing pathogens.

He continued the discussion, saying that he had never been vaccinated. When he had smallpox it was severe. But he had fewer pockmarks (we saw none, though he indicated where one used to show on his cheek) than some people who had been vaccinated. So he was "agin" it. I assured him that science was as much victimized by authority and habit as other forms of human endeavor; he himself had taught us all to break prison bonds.

He had an unmistakable interest in my work, which warmed and surprised me. Now "O. K." had, unquestionably, greatly exaggerated my work and my attainments. "Just what is a hormone?" he eagerly inquired. I had been tipped off to the fact that the redoubtable old enemy of vivisection had pernicious anemia and faithfully took the hepatic therapy for which Minot and Whipple had received the Nobel prize. "A hormone might be called a vitamin which the body itself makes or should make," I said. "One of them," I added, "is a substance made in the liver to regulate the manufacture of the proper amounts and kinds of blood cells." We learned about this, I assured him, by experimenting on animals and giving them a great need to produce blood cells. Not the slightest indication did Shaw give that I was thus challenging his angry tirades against animal experimentation, but I went on with the conversation quickly, for I was sure the great sly man had gotten the point. I talked, of course, of other hormones; ultimately of the growth hormone, and of giants and acromegalics. Shaw said at once that Oscar Wilde had with certainty some acromegaly, and that Wilde's mother was acromegalic and made noticeably clumsy movements in grasping things even near by.

As for the application of science to human affairs, he said that of course we would have the sense to breed human beings some day; he confidently expected it, though in general he doubted the intelligence of man (I think his chief doubts are of man's political wisdom). Then he fell suddenly into some delightful remarks. "The qualities desirable for the mother of one's children and so-called good genetics were quite different from the compatibility and companionship of a spouse and these again might be entirely different from the dangerous thing, sexual attraction." He said that he was twice deeply in love but both times recognized it as absolutely impossible that he could live with the woman in question.

The remarkable old man had taken an unmistakable liking to me and

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I to him. I did not climb a throne; neither did he. A gesture from Kyllman reassured us in our feeling that we should go, for fear of taxing his strength. He came over and asked me whether I could remain about for some time yet and would not come out again. I replied that this would have to be on my next trip to England. "I don't know I myself will be about then," he said significantly. He insisted on showing us to the door. Now Kyllman had also told us that Shaw would not hesitate to leap from a warm room into the snow and might thus end his life with pneumonia. So we were sufficiently alarmed. We had said good-bye and Dorothy then pluckily shut the door in his face, and our regret for rudeness was more than balanced by relief that he remained there in front of his glowing fire as we stepped out into the biting cold. But we also were warmed all the next hour not only by Kyllman's blankets but by his remark that he had never seen G. B. S. better, and by these happy recollections.

*BOOKBINDING**

Reviewed by Peter Fahey

IT IS PERHAPS not too dogmatic to say that if the book-lover does not have some understanding of bookbinding he is supporting an art ignorantly. Is the book in his hand bound on sound functional principles? Is the design of the binding a thing of high quality, and suited to the character of the text?

Edith Diehl's book is an admirable survey course for the layman, as well as a stimulating history and handbook for the practicing hand bookbinder.

Here, with superior clarity, and consistently entertaining, is the history of bookbinding, from its clay tablet and papyrus-roll ante-

* *Bookbinding. Its Background and Technique.* By Edith Diehl. 2 Vols. 251 and 406 pp. 91 collotypes, 247 drawings. New York: Rinehart & Co. \$25.

Peter Fahey, a Californian, has followed the path of the bookbinder over many parts of the world. While in Paris, she studied with Morin-Pons, followed by a course with Ignatz Wiemeler of the Akademie für Graphische Kunst in Leipsic. In England, Peter Fahey had instruction with Douglas Cockerell and Thomas Harrison, with the unusual experience of "working at the bench" with the well-known craftsmen of the firm of H. T. Wood of London. She now maintains her studio in San Francisco, and is considered one of the foremost bookbinders in America.

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cedents to the finest modern creations of the craft; plus an excellently detailed and illustrated exposition of all the processes involved.

Medieval monks laboring in the *scriptoria*—their copying-and-binding workrooms; the Renaissance development of bookbinding as a specialized craft, encouraged by great patrons such as the Medici; the spread, from Moorish innovators in Spain, of the art of gold tooling; the rise, along with machine civilization, of mechanized bookcasing, with its inevitable detriment to art; the revolt of such men as Cobden-Sanderson, William Morris' friend and fellow-idealist, who led the return to the craft ideal—these are a few of the main scenes in Miss Diehl's very readable narrative.

She then proceeds, with the delight of the epicure and the precision of the scientist, to treat of styles in binding; historically, geographically, and with fascinating reference to many great artists and the hand-stamp and the roll. This section should be of particular interest to the collector, as facilitating his determination of the age and nationality of a binding.

In her first one hundred and ninety-four pages she gives you, without omission of anything important, the historical picture that previous writers have usually found difficult to delineate in three times the wordage.

The dilemma of the artist-bookbinder in America is discussed, its causes shown, and the cure proposed. Paucity of facilities for learning the mechanics of the craft, and the even rarer stimulation to the kind of creative design that raises bookbinding to the level of important art, are two factors. A third is the problem of labor, which is mainly a problem of wages. A fourth factor is the scarcity and costliness of fine materials, most of which still have to come from abroad.

All the fine bookbinding done in this country is done by two sorts of people: foreign-born workmen, trained under the apprentice system: and a handful of zealots, chiefly women, who have usually made pilgrimages to the old fountainheads at Paris, Leipsic, and London.

What Miss Diehl (and every bookbinding enthusiast) wants to see is the establishment of schools of bookbinding staffed by teachers who have themselves achieved distinction in the craft. Before the war, such schools existed in a number of European countries. Some of the schools were government-subsidized. Miss Diehl is firmly convinced that America has the necessary potential of talent, and that if this talent were offered opportunities for acquiring a sound grounding in tech-

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nique, and if a mastery of the fundamentals of drawing, design, and color were a required part of the training, America would soon produce master binders whose brains and hands would give us creative work of a fine order. And she would like to see such schools supplemented by a well-regulated apprenticeship system with high standards of skill.

The last third of the first volume contains a list of references comprising most of the important literature on bookbinding, a glossary of bookbinding terms, and ninety-one fine reproductions of photographs. Most book-lovers will find the photographs a delight: bookbinders may find themselves already familiar with the larger part of the examples shown.

Volume Two, the how-to-do-it volume, starts with a frank avowal of its limitations. Hand bookbinding cannot be learned from books alone. Long hours of work under skilled guidance are essential to even a moderate proficiency.

However, this volume, built as it is around illustrations, and with its directions clear and concise, should be an admirable supplement to instruction and experience. It is valuable for use in reviewing what one has been taught, for referring to when in doubt about some stage of a process, and because of its fund of special tricks and miscellaneous knowledge.

One of the early sections deals with seldom-discussed but vital aspects of all handcraft—the physiology and psychology of handling tools. These things have great bearing not only on accomplishment, but on the pleasure of working. A rewarding sense of power and freedom comes from skillfully using a tool.

In the section “Organization of the Workbench” she makes an important distinction between hurry and speed, a distinction that might well point a moral for our whole economy: *hurry* vitiates and destroys efficient operation: whereas *speed* is a fruit of efficiency, and can in handcraft be produced only by effort under careful control.

Most of the work of hand bookbinding is done with simple hand tools: most of the machines used in a hand bindery are hand-powered and hand-operated. One would expect an exponent of the craft ideal to hate the very notion of mechanizing his craft. But the straightness of Miss Diehl’s artistic thinking is attested by her candid concession that if science should some day manage to make bookbinding machines that could equal the skilled, loving hand in producing sound construc-

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tion and fine quality, science would have benefited the world of books.

Speaking of sound construction, a basic point made concerning hand bookbinding is that it gives us books which from a strictly functional point of view are superior to the mass-production product. A hand-bound book, by virtue of its better materials and construction, will, while retaining its beauty, outwear the commercially cased volume by many scores of years.

Edith Diehl is definitely not a decoration-cultist. She aligns herself with that school of binders that dislikes seeing the structural features of a binding completely buried in order to provide a surface for the purely decorative aspects of design. She wisely feels that the structure of a binding, if it not obtrude itself too rudely, is as significant as decoration is, and should be integrated with the design instead of sacrificed to it.

Her knowledge of techniques is equalled by her intimate acquaintance with all the virtues, limitations, and idiosyncrasies of materials. The things she has to say about leathers are explicitly valuable.

Volume Two, like Volume One, contains a glossary, an excellent feature of which is its inclusion of terms which, though previously defined in Volume One, recur in Volume Two. This obviates a lot of searching from volume to volume.

The author is the first American to write a book of this scope and caliber. She was educated at Wellesley and the University of Jena, and began her bookbinding career in Paris. She spent many years in famous ateliers in Paris, Brussels, and London. She planned and directed the binding of the limited editions issued by William Edwin Rudge in Mount Vernon, New York. She operated her own bindery in New York City. For years she lectured on bookbinding and taught it. Just before World War II she toured the British Isles and the Continent, visiting binderies and libraries, studying the latest methods in processes and design, and examining countless volumes. Her qualifications as an authority on her subject are obviously more than ample, and her life has been an outstanding example of intelligent, ardent devotion to a noble, too-little-appreciated art.

The book fills a great need, and is deserving of wide support. One of the best ways in which well-wishers to the craft could further its endeavors would be to buy this book, read it, loan it (*particularly* to young people), and urge public libraries to buy and display it.

The few faults it has are faults of omission rather than of commis-





The Grabhorns

Today's expedition takes us to 1335 Sutter, in the former synagogue school whose present tenants are (left to right, above) Jane Grabhorn of the Colt Press; her husband, Bob; Bob's elder brother, Ed, of the Grabhorn Press; and a wistful lady of polychrome plaster, name unknown.

The Colt Press and the Grabhorn Press are the main reason for San Francisco's reputation as a world center of fine printing—limited editions, private printings, collectors' items, all printed and bound by loving hands in this mussy museum of primitive California paintings, pistols, documents and do-funnies.

"You'd better not write about us," said Bob Grabhorn, with the sort of preoccupied sincerity that musicians must show when doping out a sonata. "It's hard to explain anything here and you'll probably get it wrong. Just mention it as a weird San Francisco spot."

"Isn't it true," I pried, "that yours is the best printing anywhere, and all like that?"

"No," he responded, thoughtfully. "But we DID help out the 'I AM' congregation next door, by piping heat in

when their furnace went out. They tune in on vibrations all the time, but I guess they couldn't get the wavelength to keep 'em warm."

Ed Grabhorn absented himself from the felicity of the type-tray long enough to show us some recent acquisitions on the wall—contemporary paintings of Vasquez being captured in Los Angeles; of Three-finger Jack persecuting a Chinese; and of Old Man Studebaker in his Placerville tire shop, before he steered his whiskers down to the lowlands to start his vehicle empire.

Time has put a price on these specimens, but its inflationary touch has worked faster on Grabhorn books—such as the "Joaquin Murietta" volumes, which retailed a few years ago at \$2.60, and now take a cool \$75.

The Grabhorns were able to keep working through the war's paper shortage, due to their luck in buying nine tons of the bankrupt French Paper Company's stock in 1939. They don't know HOW many titles they've published since Ed started in 1915 at Indianapolis.

"I think it says in a book," Ed said, looking around unhappily, "somewhere."



The Black Vine Press

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sion. Chief of these is its failure to deal at length with the special esthetics of creative binding-design. To design original, effective, imaginative bindings requires something more than the basic knowledge of design advocated by Miss Diehl.

The author devotes twelve chapters to forwarding (construction, including covering) and only three chapters to finishing (decoration). This seems disproportionate. The relative importance of forwarding might be likened to that of a roof on a house. A house is no good without a roof, but (to make free with Edgar Guest's most made-free-with line) it takes a heap o' decoratin' to make a house a home. This is not to be construed as a plea for overdecoration, but as an emphasis on the importance of finishing. Particularly in this country, one sees many handbound books that are well-forwarded but of an inferior technique in finishing. In hand bookbinding, as in all handicrafts, there persists an unfortunate misconception that there is some deep soulful value in crudeness, the sloppy flower of the plant of imprecision.

Miss Diehl's book makes no mention of what has happened to the hand bookbinding world since 1939. We would like to know what the war has done to the great European craftsmen such as Georges Cretté, Jean Lambert, Ignatz Wiemeler, George Fisher, Valentine Boissonas.

The author could have provided a source of inspiration, had she discussed the work of those who are doing outstanding binding in America today. Helen Louise Boettger, of Hackensack, New Jersey; the Gerhard Gerlachs, of New York City; Peter Franck of Gaylordsville, Connecticut; Christine Hamilton, of New York City; Belle McMurry Young, of San Francisco; Florence Walter, of San Francisco—these are but a few of the people whose achievements might well have been mentioned as stimuli to beginners and criteria for collectors.

But beginners, as well as collectors, cannot fail to be inspired by this book. It should be a strong call to young people with handcraft leanings and art ideals. The art of hand bookbinding is a living art, capable of new motives and new forms of expression. Young blood and young ideas are what are chiefly needed if this art is to play its full rôle in American culture.

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CALIFORNIA POETRY FOLIOS

MEMBERS HAVE NOW RECEIVED three of the twelve parts of the 1947 keepsakes: *Ballade of Fog in the Canon*, Gelett Burgess; *From the Golden Gate Bridge*, Stanton A. Coblentz; and *At the Stevenson Fountain*, Wallace Irwin. The first was designed and printed (on a hand-press) by Frances and Ted Lilienthal and Edith Van Antwerp at their Quercus Press at San Mateo. The Coblentz folio is the first item to be printed by Carroll T. Harris at his Aucune Press, San Francisco. Part Three was designed and printed (also on a hand-press) by Ted Freedman at his Platen Press, Orinda.

The April folio will reproduce *Long View*, by Genevieve Taggard, and will be printed by Jackson Burke at Saratoga. Poems of Marie deL. Welch will be featured in the May folio, which will be produced in Los Angeles by Ward Ritchie. Part Six, *After This, Sea*, by Josephine Miles, will be printed at James D. Hart's press at Berkeley. Poets and printers of the remaining six parts will be announced.

The purpose of the series is to present members with representative works of twelve leading California poets. The poems are chosen by the authors themselves, each of whom writes a comment explaining the reason why this particular selection was made. The series will have unusual typographical interest by reason of the fact that each folder will be produced at an amateur press. While some of the printers are commercially engaged in that craft, their work for this series will be strictly non-professional. Ward Ritchie wrote: "Does Ted Lilienthal want this printed at the Ward Ritchie Press or at the one I have in my backyard?" Mr. Lilienthal replied: "By all means make this a backyard folio."

That members are pleased and interested in this, the eleventh of the Club's keepsake series, is indicated by their comments.

INA COOLBRITH EVENING

WELL OVER A HUNDRED interested persons met in the Assembly Room of the San Francisco Public Library in the evening of March 12, 1947, to open the exhibit of material relating to Ina Coolbrith and her work sponsored by the Club in collaboration with the San Francisco Public Library and the Ina Coolbrith Circle. Ina Coolbrith was an intimate of the great western writers of her time and a moving spirit in the literary life of the San Francisco Bay region where she made her home

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until her death in 1928. For many years she was the only living member of the group that made the *Overland Monthly* famous in the early 1870's.

Dr. Franklin Walker, author of *San Francisco Literary Frontier* and Professor of History at Mills College, addressed the group on "The Spirit of the Times of Ina Coolbrith." Mrs. Derrick Norman Lehmer, president of Berkeley Pen Women, spoke on "Ina Coolbrith, the Poetess." Mrs. Hazel Snell Schreiber, president of the Ina Coolbrith Circle, gave the history of the Ina Coolbrith Circle and described its activities. Ina Cooke Craig, a grandniece of Miss Coolbrith, gave her personal recollections of the poetess. The program was closed with the reading by Mrs. Max C. Sloss of several poems by the heroine of the evening.

This exhibit and program was the second of a series sponsored jointly by the Club and the San Francisco Public Library. The first was in December 1946 and was devoted to George Sterling. The Club plans to continue the series. A committee under the chairmanship of Edgar Kahn is planning evenings and exhibits devoted to Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, Joaquin Miller, Jack London, Robert Louis Stevenson, Frank Norris and other western literary characters.

FUTURE PUBLISHING PLANS

MEMBERS WILL PRESENTLY RECEIVE an announcement of the Club's next publications: an extremely interesting account of the California Gold Rush, seen through the eyes of a distinguished Chilean author of the middle 19th century, Vicente Perez Rosales. This narrative of Rosales' adventures in California in '49 and '50 has long been in print in the author's native language; it has now been translated into English by Arturo Torres-Rioseco (who also contributes an introduction) and Edwin H. Morby, and the Club will publish it about June 15, under the title, *California Adventure*. Details of format and design, as well as price and number of copies, will be contained in the forthcoming announcement. The volume will be designed and printed by Taylor & Taylor.

A second publication, scheduled for late Fall, resembles the Rosales narrative in that it, too, has a California interest appropriate to the centenary years we are now entering, and contains material not hitherto available to collectors. It will be the first printing of a recently discovered collection of material relating to the Donner Party, much

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of it written by members of the group on their overland journey and during their tragic winter in the Sierra a century ago. *The Donner Miscellany* will reproduce many of the documents in facsimile, and the work will have an introduction by Carroll D. Hall, curator of Sutter's Fort Museum at Sacramento. It will be in a sense a companion work to *The Diary of Patrick Breen*, which the Club published (and promptly sold out) last year, and will be produced by the same printer, the L-D Allen Press, although the two volumes will not be identical in size or typographical treatment.

THE PERKINS SALE

[Sale of the Library of the late Senator George C. Perkins, at Butterfield & Butterfield, San Francisco, March 1947.]

Edna Martin Parratt

GEORGE C. PERKINS loved California. From the time of his arrival in the middle '50's as a lad, he served her as prosperous business man, state senator, governor, and as United States senator from 1893 until 1915, when he was succeeded in Washington by James D. Phelan. During this long career he acquired the customary library of an active and literate man of that period, which he eventually housed in his home on Perkins Street in Oakland. The old home is now to be razed, and on Thursday, March 6, 1947, the major portion of the library was sold at auction at the galleries of Butterfield & Butterfield, being the fourth session of their sale of the contents of the Perkins home.

The book sale consisted of 404 lots. While there was no pretense that it was a collection of Californiana, many incidental volumes of California interest were listed in the catalog, although nothing of impressive rarity appeared. It is unfortunate, in view of the fact that bids were accepted from absent buyers, that the catalog did not publish more complete and detailed information regarding the books offered. Seventy lots were listed as miscellaneous volumes, some assembled by subject, as "3 misc. vol. pertaining to mining," or "4 misc. volumes." This lack of description quite naturally proved to be a hardship to those unable to inspect the collection prior to the sale. Hidden in these lots were several good, although not definitely rare, California items,

Edna Martin Parratt, for many years on the staff of the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, is Managing Director of the California Historical Society.

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among them the index volume to Bancroft, *Chronicles of the Builders of the Commonwealth* (the seven volumes of the set being sold as lot 106 at \$80); Riordan, *First Half-Century of St. Ignatius Church and College*; Baker, *Eloquence of the Far West*, and the *First Steamship Pioneers*.

That the books were in exceptionally fine condition may explain the general high level of prices which prevailed at the sale; the increasing interest in Californiana was doubtless a contributing factor, as was, of course, the rapid rise in prices everywhere. Hittell, *History of California*, which in 1927 brought \$16 at the Holmes sale, sold here for \$70; a presentation copy of Eldredge, *History of San Francisco* brought \$25, approximately twice the price at which an unsigned set can be purchased of almost any local dealer; Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece* also brought \$25, a normal price being somewhat under ten. A first edition of *Progress and Poverty*, always desirable, rose to \$122.50; the *Pacific Yacht Club* of 1884 to \$31. Phelps, *Contemporary Biography* sold for \$14; at the above-mentioned sale it went, together with Guinn, *History of California*, for \$5. Bancroft's *Works*, once so prevalent as to sell for \$30, brought the high price of \$170.

Other prices of interest were: Swasey, *Early Days and Men of California*, \$46; Cronise, *Natural Wealth of California*, \$4; Browne, *Report of the Debates in the Convention of California*, \$11; Sherman, *Fifty Years of Masonry*, \$12; the *Overland Monthly*, 1868-1875 and 1883 to June 1895, bound, \$220; the *Californian*, 1880-1882, bound, \$57.50; Davis, *Political Conventions*, \$19; Downie, *Hunting for Gold*, \$36; Burnett, *Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer*, \$50; a first edition of *The Call of the Wild*, \$20; Mighels, *Story of the Files*, \$24; Blake-Alverson, *Sixty Years of California Song*, \$25; Bell, *Reminiscences of a Ranger*, first edition, \$40; Greenhow, *History of Oregon and California*, second edition, \$19; Davis, *Sixty Years in California*, \$37; *Debates and Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of 1878-1879*, \$25; Field, *Personal Reminiscences of Early California*, autographed, \$32.50, (the *Attempted Assassination*, \$9); *The State*, edited by Henry George, vol. 1: 1-11, \$35; and the *Transactions of the Commonwealth Club*, 1903-1908, \$11.

Many private collectors, unable to attend the afternoon session, were keenly disappointed, and it is hoped that Butterfield & Butterfield, who conducted the sale with precision and rapidity, will give consideration to the advantages of holding future sales at evening sessions.

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DE SOTO'S THE DISCOVERY OF FLORIDA

WHEN THE De Soto narrative was published in December, the directors believed that it would be recognized as one of the most important books ever to bear the Club's imprint. Subsequent events have amply borne out that belief, for *The Discovery of Florida* has received uncommonly high praise from a wide variety of sources. The jury of the American Institute of Graphic Arts selected it for inclusion in the current Fifty Books of the Year exhibition, now being shown at the Grolier Club in New York. Bruce Rogers, dean of American fine printers, in a letter to the Grabhorn Press praised the design and ornamentation and craftsmanship in terms so enthusiastic that the Grabhorns have modestly refused to allow us to quote from it. Finally, and equally gratifying, Club members have recognized the book's beauty and historical importance in such numbers that—despite the necessarily high price of \$27.50—more than two hundred of the 275 copies printed have been subscribed.

Because it is unlikely that the remaining copies will be long in stock, the Club reminds members who have not yet bought copies that they will avoid possible disappointment by doing so promptly. A duplicate order card is enclosed. Please note the following conditions: Orders from members who do not already have a copy will be filled first. Members who ordered earlier may apply for a second copy, and these will be held until all initial orders have been filled, following which, such copies as remain will be allotted to them. In the event that the duplicate orders exceed the number of copies remaining, they will be drawn by lot.



NOTICE

The WELLS FARGO HISTORY ROOM, located in the Bank's building at 30 Montgomery Street, contains relics of pony-express and covered-wagon days; an original Hangtown stagecoach; early western franks and postmarks, firearms, pictures, and documents. ✓ Open to visitors 10 to 3 daily, 10 to 12 Saturdays. WELLS FARGO BANK & UNION TRUST CO., San Francisco. Established 1852.

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LIBRARY MEMBERS

In answer to a query as to how many libraries are members of The Book Club of California, the following list is printed. Some are relatively new members, others are members of long standing and have on their shelves practically all of the Club's publications.

Alameda Public Library, Alameda, California
Alma College Library, Alma, California
Bohemian Club Library, San Francisco, California
Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts
Brooklyn Public Library, Brooklyn, New York
California Historical Society, San Francisco, California
California State Library, Sacramento, California
William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Los Angeles, California
Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan
Grosvenor Library, Buffalo, New York
Harvard College Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California
Indiana University Library, Bloomington, Indiana
Library, Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California
Library, University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California
Library, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California
Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, California
Madera County Free Library, Madera, California
Mills College Library, Oakland, California
Monterey-Fresno Diocesan Library, Fresno, California
Monterey Public Library, Monterey, California
New York Public Library, New York, New York
Oakland Public Library, Oakland, California
Occidental College, Los Angeles, California
Pacific Union College, Angwin, California
Pomona College Library, Claremont, California
San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco, California
Santa Monica Public Library, Santa Monica, California
Scripps College Library, Claremont, California
A. K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands, California
Stanford University, Stanford University, California
St. Mary's College, St. Mary's College, California
Trinity College Library, Dublin, Ireland
University of California Library, Berkeley, California
Watsonville Public Library, Watsonville, California
History Room, Wells Fargo Bank & Union Trust Co., San Francisco, California
Welwood Murray Memorial Library, Palm Springs, California

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ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

The following names have been added to the roll since the appearance of the Winter News-Letter:

MEMBER		SPONSOR
Alma College Library	Alma	Membership Committee
Morris Bernstein	Los Angeles	Glen Dawson
Theodore F. Bernstein	New York	Sidney Schwartz
Gordon L. Byers	Berkeley	Mrs. W. R. Holman
Norman V. Carlson	Oakland	Mrs. Elizabeth Downs
John Hutchinson Cook	Trenton, N. J.	Membership Committee
Miss Cecile Creed	San Francisco	Edgar Waite
Homer D. Crotty	Los Angeles	Membership Committee
Arnaldo D'Ammeo	Berkeley	Mrs. Hugh T. Dobbins
Detroit Public Library	Detroit, Michigan	Membership Committee
James W. Elliott	San Francisco	Edgar Waite
Ted Freedman	Orinda	Oscar Lewis
William H. Freeman	San Francisco	Mrs. Elizabeth Downs
Robert K. Haas	New York	Morgan A. Gunst
Dr. George P. Hammond	Berkeley	Francis P. Farquhar
Phil Townsend Hanna	Los Angeles	Edgar Waite
Carroll T. Harris	Atherton	Albert Sperisen
Frank Holm	Oakland	Albert Sperisen
E. O. Holter, Jr.	San Francisco	J. L. Bradley
Indiana University Library	Bloomington, Ind.	Membership Committee
Sinclair Tip Jardine	Santa Monica	Membership Committee
Harry H. Kem	Beverly Hills	Judge Ardis M. Walker
Walter Z. Kolasa	Berkeley	Mrs. Elizabeth Downs
Walter S. Martin	San Francisco	Membership Committee
Ernest L. Mathy	Orinda	Albert Sperisen
Will T. Morrish	Berkeley	Membership Committee
S. R. Parkinson	Marysville	Membership Committee
James B. Ransohoff	San Francisco	Morgan A. Gunst
A. K. Smiley Public Library	Redlands	Membership Committee
E. M. Sundquist	Santa Ana	A. B. Harris
Arthur W. Towne	San Francisco	Edgar Waite
Mrs. Margaret Walker	Ann Arbor, Mich.	Mrs. Elizabeth Downs
Mrs. A. Jeffery Wilson	Watsonville	Mrs. Joe Chamberlain
Howard Willoughby	San Francisco	Edgar Waite
George Trig Yonge	Blairsden	Augustus B. Guy
Miss Mary Yost	Stanford University	Membership Committee

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FIFTY BOOKS OF THE YEAR

PACIFIC COAST PRINTERS and publishers were honored by the inclusion of four titles in the Fifty Books of 1946, just selected by The American Institute of Graphic Arts. The purposes of the selection of the Fifty Books each year are to honor the work of those designers, manufacturers and publishers who in the opinion of the jury have solved most successfully their artistic and technical problems; and to demonstrate to the public through exhibitions what are the principles of good book-making. This year marks the twenty-fifth such annual selection by The American Institute of Graphic Arts. The Fifty Books is a traveling exhibition and will be displayed in San Francisco, Los Angeles and other western cities.

The Book Club of California as publishers and the Grabhorn Press of San Francisco as printers are represented with two books: *The Discovery of Florida* by Don Hernando De Soto by a "Gentleman of Alvas" and *A Sojourn in California by the King's Orphan*, by G. M. Waseurtz. The first volume is the Club's most recent publication. The jury's comment concerning it was "this is a noble volume, splendidly printed"; and of the second title, "its great qualities are the Grabhorn's characteristic baldness and vigor." Maurice S. Kaplan, in the *Publishers' Weekly* under the title, "Fifty Books, 1947: A Commentary," writes: "The first group consists of nine books made with the utmost care. The designer was the printer or, if not, at least was in a position to exercise close supervision over the work. These, naturally, are the most successful of the Fifty and vie with one another for attention. From the Grabhorn Press comes the most dazzling book in the show, *The Discovery of Florida*. The yellow paper covers printed in orange-red and black set the pace that is followed throughout the title pages and specially drawn pictorial initials and decorations. Handset in Goudy's Franciscan type and beautifully printed on handmade Canson et Montgolfier paper imported from France, the whole gives the effect of a parchment on which a talented scribe has done a beautiful and painstaking job and on which then an uninhibited illuminator went on a delicious spree. It is unfair to look at another book immediately afterwards. *A Sojourn in California* from the same press looks tame by comparison. At first glance the two seem to have in common only bright paper covers. The Centaur type seems anemic after the Franciscan. But once your eyes have become readjusted you will find a high

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degree of elegance in these islands of Centaur type in a wide sea of fine paper, topped by extremely large folios and upper and lower case running heads and flanked by side heads in the broad outside margins. And if there is no profusion of color in the text there is a generous sprinkling of inserts: black and white drawings, sketches and maps, and a few full color drawings."

Also included in the Fifty Books is *The Spoilage* by Dorothy Swaine Thomas and Richard S. Nishimoto, printed and published by the University of California Press; and *Gedichte Aus Den Jahren 1908-1945* by Franz Werfel, designed by Saul Marks, printed by The Plantin Press, and published by Pazifische Press, all of Los Angeles. Of the first the jury commented, "This book, dealing with the treatment of Japanese Americans during the war, is an excellent example of fresh typography in presenting a subject which would have brought on the lugubrious in most designers. The text pages are restrained but pleasant, the chapter openings original, and title page and binding attractive in themselves and consistent with all other elements." Regarding the second title, the jury's comment was, "This book has such perfect unity that it is difficult to single out for mention any of its obviously fine characteristics: beautiful type face, good composition, lovely paper, excellent presswork, appropriate binding. It must be held in one's hand to be appreciated."

MISCELLANY

THE PRINTERS' VALHALLA is the name given by the Printing House of Leo Hart, of Buffalo, New York, to a series of biographies of celebrated printers which it will begin publishing in 1947. The series will be edited by George Parker Winship and is an outgrowth of the lectures on the History of Printing which he delivered annually at Harvard University from 1915 to 1935. Mr. Winship's competency for this new task he has undertaken can not be questioned. The range of his knowledge and the scholarship of his studies is evidenced by a long list of writings on a wide variety of typographical subjects and periods. Four volumes in the series will be published in the immediate future. The first, written by Mr. Winship himself, is devoted to the work and life of the late Daniel Berkeley Updike, founder of The Merrymount Press, Boston. The second volume will be a life study of Isaiah Thomas, of Boston and Worcester, by Clifford K. Shipton, librarian of the American Anti-

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quarian Society which was founded by Thomas. Gregory Dexter, of London and New England, and the printer, in 1643, of Roger Williams' *Key into the Language of the Natives of New England*, is the subject of the third volume, which has been written by Bradford F. Swan, of the staff of the *Providence Journal*. A study of the life and works of Peter Schoeffer, of Gernsheim, assistant to Gutenberg and son-in-law and partner of Johann Fust, is the contribution of Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, of Columbia University, to the series. It is expected that each volume will contain several illustrations of work characteristic of its subject. Each volume is being written primarily for readers who are actively engaged in the various aspects of the graphic arts, but it is hoped that they will be equally interesting to some of those who read books for relaxation and enlightenment, as well as to those who are devoted to book collecting.

One of the distinguished prewar typographical journals was *Signature*, edited by Oliver Simon and published by the Curwen Press in England. Late in 1940 the Curwen Press received a direct hit from a high explosive bomb and the publication of *Signature* was suspended with the December issue of that year. Number 1, New Series, of *Signature, a Quadrimestrial of Typography and Graphic Arts*, edited by Oliver Simon, appeared in July 1946. It will be published three times a year in the months of July, November and March. The cost is fifteen shillings per annum and the address 9 North Street, Plaistow, London, E-15. The first two issues contained excellent articles entitled "Joseph Gaspard Gillé, Typefounder, Printer and Typographer in Paris 1789-1827" by Ellie Howe, "Barnard Newdigate, Typographer" by Basil Blackwell, "Pierantonio Sallando and Girolamo Pagliarolo, a Study in the Later Development of Humanistic Script" by James Wardrop, and "Marc Chagall as a Book Illustrator" by Michael Ayrtton, with a bibliography of Chagall's work by René Ben Sussan. The second issue contains a well considered review by Reynolds Stone of the type face known as "Emerson," first called "Spiral," cut between 1935 and 1940 by the Monotype Corporation from the designs of Joseph Blumenthal, of New York.

Volume I, Number 1 of *Imprimatur, A Literary Quarterly for Bibliophiles*, was issued in January 1947 from Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Almost immediately its address was changed to P. O. Box 51,

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Evanston Station, Cincinnati 7, Ohio. This new periodical is edited by Lloyd Emerson Siberell, with Lawrence S. Thompson and L. M. Wilson as associate editors and Dan Burne Jones as Art editor. The subscription price is \$2.00 for four issues. It will carry articles on bibliography, private presses, fine printing, bookbinding, and illustrated editions by eminent authorities on the subject.

Friends of Dr. Elmer Best, of Los Angeles, received in January a copy of a "Finding List" covering his library of Vinciana. This list is but a preview of a greater work, a bibliography of Leonardo de Vinci, that Dr. Best and his assistants have been working on for some time. They hope to present two sections of the full bibliography during 1947.

The *Harvard Library Bulletin*, which appeared with various titles and scope from 1876 to 1894, reappeared in January 1947. The revived periodical will appear three times a year and will deal primarily with the functions of the many Harvard libraries, with the results of research based on their holdings and with more general library problems. Its scope appears to include the printer, bibliographer and collector in many diverse fields.

The literature about American libraries has been enriched in recent months by the appearance of three books of significance. These are *The Yale Collections* by Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis, *The First Century of the John Carter Brown Library* by Lawrence C. Wroth, and *William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, Report of the First Decade, 1934-1944*, edited by Lawrence Clark Powell. All have the quality of enthusiasm and are characterized by a conviction of the importance of all such institutions wherever they may be found.

The Friends of the Huntington Library, an organization that gives every evidence of possessing great energy and vitality, recently distributed to its members a facsimile reprint of *The Laws of the Town of San Francisco*, San Francisco, 1847, with an able and informative introduction by William W. Clary, President of the Friends and distinguished Los Angeles attorney. One hundred copies of this first pamphlet printed in San Francisco, and probably the first in English in California, were printed in December 1847 in the office of *The Californian*. This printing office had moved from Monterey earlier in the

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same year and its printing press and much of its materials were those with which Zamarano had established the first printing office in California in 1834. As it was the first attempt by the Americans to establish law and order in local government in California, this pamphlet is of great importance.

Many will be pleased to learn that the Zamoranans, or Zamoranos, or Zamoranistas, to all of which members of The Zamorano Club, Los Angeles, will answer, have revived *Hoja Volante*, their interesting little periodical of bookish gossip. Thirteen issues were issued, on a "now and then" schedule, between June 1934 and December 1938. The masthead of No. XIV, dated February 1947, promises that it will be "published quarterly." Dieha, Senors!

Harold Seeger, Lawton Kennedy and Albert Sperisen, all members of this Club, presented members of The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, on the occasion of "Printers' Night," February 10, 1947, with an excellent reprinting of Herbert P. Horn's "Some Considerations of the Nature of Fine Art," from the July 1891 issue of *The Hobby Horse*.

The Hart Press, the truly private typographical enterprise of fellow members Dr. and Mrs. James D. Hart, has been reestablished in their home at 450 Vermont Street, Berkeley. In observance of the two hundred and fifteenth anniversary of George Washington's birth, on February 22, 1947, the Press recently issued a tiny volume, the text of which was excerpts from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson on January 2, 1814, to Dr. Walter Jones, and the illustrations, portraits of Washington and Jefferson, cancelled United States postage stamps. Twenty-five copies only were printed.

La Peninsula, the quarterly journal of the San Mateo County Historical Association, entered its fourth volume with its February 1947 issue. The leading article in this issue is the first installment of "Adobes of a Century Ago." At the suggestion of this society the Planning Commission of San Mateo County has recommended to the Board of Supervisors the purchase by the County of the adobe home of Don Francisco Sanchez near Point San Pedro. This society has recently distributed to its members, with the assistance of the San Mateo County Title Company, an interesting pamphlet, "Historic Names and Places in San

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Mateo County," by Roscoe D. Wyatt. The office and museum of the Society are at San Mateo Junior College, 124 Baldwin Avenue, San Mateo.

Gabriel Wells, one of the nation's leading collectors and rare-book dealers, died on November 6, 1946. He was eighty-five years old. Arriving in this country from Hungary some fifty years ago almost penniless, he became an international figure in the field of rare books and manuscripts. Wells made many gifts to institutions in this country, England, France and Hungary. The Hungarian government awarded him the Cross of the Order of Merit, Second Class, and Rutgers University made him a doctor of humane letters.

Introduction to Typography, by OLIVER SIMON. To a book lover, this is a "must." For the first time the "story of a book" has been put together in a simply written, concise and amazingly complete handbook. Nowhere else can all this information be found between one set of covers. Actually, it was written for the young printer and publisher; and as such, it fills a great need.

The book runs the gamut from the "Rules of Composition," "Choosing of Typefaces," "The Setting of Text" (which includes the printing of plays and poetry), how to handle author's notes and indices, "Illustration," "Paper," "Presswork and Bindery." Each chapter is beautifully illustrated with examples (many in color) of fine printing and design.

Oliver Simon is the director of the renowned Curwen Press in England, and as a typographical designer he is world-famous. He was one of the former editors of the *Fleurion* and of *Signature*—two great journals of typography and printing.

Faber & Faber, London. \$3.75 at most book dealers.